

L.—On a new Species of *Microtus* from Asia Minor.

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THROUGH the courtesy of Mr. Oldfield Thomas, I have recently had the opportunity of examining at the British Museum of Natural History a number of specimens of small mammals collected by me in Western Asia Minor a few years ago, and presented to the National Collection. On careful examination of a vole, of which three specimens were obtained in the vicinity of Smyrna, I have been led to the conclusion that they represent a new species of the genus *Microtus*, although they have at the same time a superficial resemblance to *M. guentheri* (Alst.), from Marash in Cilicia, and to *M. hartingi* (B.-Ham.), from Thessaly, and I therefore propose to give it the name of:—

*Microtus lydius*, sp. n.

Somewhat similar to the typical *M. guentheri*, but distinguishable from it by its longer tail and greyish-white belly as well as by other minor differences.

*Description.*—General colour above light fawn, presenting a slightly grizzled appearance on the back proper, where some of the hairs are tipped with black. Flanks more brightly coloured owing to the practical absence of black-tipped hairs, and slightly tinged with fulvous at the lines separating them from the greyish white of the underparts. The hairs are all slate-grey at their bases. Underpart of body, belly, throat, and inner sides of legs uniformly greyish white; the hairs all slate-grey at their bases, and white distally for about a third of their length; but, owing to the grey of the bases of the hairs showing through to a certain extent, the general appearance is greyish white to pale grey. In *M. guentheri* and in *M. hartingi* the greyish white of the underside is washed with yellow, giving it (especially in the former) a decided buffy appearance, which is totally absent in these Smyrna specimens. Ears moderate, very thinly clad with hairs along their outer edges. Hind feet moderately hairy on underside, but not nearly so much as in *M. guentheri*. Both fore and hind feet are coloured pale fawn on the upper side, a paler shade of the dorsal fawn-colour. Tail relatively short, covered with short hairs, whitish below, fawn above; it is roughly about one and a half times the length of the hind foot.

*Skull*.—It is difficult to compare this with that of *M. guentheri*, as the skulls of both specimens of the latter at the British Museum are broken and the posterior parts missing. The length of the molar series is approximately the same. Pattern of molars about as in *M. guentheri*, but the angles of the enamel folding less strongly acute or sharply pointed, and more rounded, and the dentine spaces slightly wider in relation to width of the enamel—a fact difficult to explain, but readily discernible to the eye. This is particularly evident in the first fold in the upper molar series.

*Dimensions of the type* (as measured in the flesh):—

Head and body 115 mm.; tail 26; hind foot 18; ear 11.

Skull: Condylar-incisive length 27.6; basilar length 24.0; greatest zygomatic breadth 15.7; width of brain-case 12.0; interorbital breadth 4.0; nasals 7.8, palatal length 13.0; length of molar series 6.5; diastema 8.4; palatal foramina 4.7. The auditory bullæ are rather small and slightly flattened on the exterior side.

*Hab.* Smyrna. Alt. 400 ft. "Trapped in an olive grove."

*Type.* Young adult male. B.M. no. 5.10.6.8. Original number 46. Collected September 20, 1905. Presented by W. F. Griffitt Blackler.

Two more specimens of an adult male and old female were examined, but unfortunately the skull of the former was not preserved, owing to having been badly smashed by the trap. This specimen, caught in January, is larger than the type—measuring, head and body 122 mm., tail 29—and the colouring is not quite so bright, probably owing to seasonal change.

This vole is distinguishable from *M. guentheri* and *M. hartingi*, the only two species to which it is at all nearly related, by the complete absence of any yellowish or buffy tinge on the greyish white of the underparts, the longer tail, and the colouring of the upper sides of the feet, besides the slight variation in the molar teeth.

I originally intended making it a subspecies of *M. guentheri*, but, on examining the type of *M. hartingi* from Thessaly, I have come to the conclusion that it presents even greater differences from either of these two than these do from each other, in general appearance as well as by the characteristics enumerated above, and I consider it therefore as deserving of full specific rank.